

ADVERTISEMENT.

The whole of *Volume Thirty-one* is now reprinted. The reader will please to recollect that the latter part of that Volume consists of Twelve Numbers of Cheap Registers, beginning with Number *Fifteen* and ending with Number *Twenty-six*. The former part of that Volume is paged in such a way as to fit with the paging of Number *Fifteen*; so that this former part, together with the twelve numbers before mentioned, make the Volume complete. They may now be bound up into a book; and a pretty little Book it will be, and will be read, I hope, by all the young men and boys in England. It will do them a great deal more good than Mrs. Hannah Moore's "*Village Politics*." The price of the former part which is just now re-printed will be *Two Shillings*, so that the whole Book will be *Four Shillings*. It may be bound for about *Sixpence*, and will serve a family for twenty years. I verily believe that four and sixpence laid out in this way would do a family a thousand times as much good as putting the same sum in one of George Rose's Saving Banks.

*Paper against Gold* will be completed next week. This is another nice little Book. Let a young man or a boy once read that, and pay good attention to what he reads; and I will pledge my life, that no paper money juggler ever deceives him as long as he lives.—There will be fifteen numbers of this work: that is *thirty pence*. This work is intended for the use of *Schools*, and of *young persons in general*. We shall be ready to receive proposals for supplying the Lancaster's and Bell's Schools upon the most accommodating terms. As to the Universities, and the Schools at Eton and Winchester, the Youths in those Seminaries are busily employed in making "*nonsense verses*" and other pursuits of the same sublime description.

The First and second numbers of Cobbett's Parliamentary Register are now ready for sale; and though I cannot say as much for this work as for the two former, I will nevertheless venture to say that it is a very fair and honest compendium, and being accompanied by the two others, is, at any rate, not calculated to do any mischief.—*Price Two pence* each number.

TO THE

PAPER-MONEY MEN.

*The great cause of the Nation's sufferings — How this cause has violated contracts. What is the meaning of national faith.—What Justice now demands at the hands of the Government.—What will be the end of all this?*

Bolton, 26th March, 1817.

PAPER-MONEY MEN,

The First Lord of the Treasury has lately said, that the *Funds* rose in consequence of the *Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act*; and the late Lord Chatham said, more than forty years ago, that the spirits of the Fundholders and Money Dealers always rose in the same proportion as the liberty of their country fell. More than thirteen years ago, I said, that, unless a stop was put to the Funding System, this country must become a *den of slaves*; for, that it would, in process of time, become impossible to carry on the System, with a great and permanent military force, and without putting an end to every fragment of the people's freedom.

This consequence was unavoidable. To collect taxes to pay the interest of such an enormous debt must necessarily produce inexpressible misery. Out of this misery must necessarily arise great discontent in the most numerous classes of the people. Out of this discontent would necessarily, in the natural course of things, arise

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tumults and acts of violence. Such *did not* arise, because hope was cherished in the breasts of the people by those "*evil minded*" men, the *Leaders of the Reformers*. But, unless a Reform took place, it was clear, that something in the way of *coercion* would be adopted. To be prepared for this coercion *an army* was necessary. Thus the *whole* of the intolerable burden arises from the Funding System; and the loss of all, even the very last of our liberties, is ascribable to the same all-destroying cause.

LORD HARROWBY, at the opening of the session, said, that this system had *saved the country*. *Saved it!* What! Is it *saved*, then? With a press under the superintendence of the Magistrates; with a new treason bill revived; with the Habeas Corpus Act suspended in time of profound peace; with millions in a state of starvation; with a ruined commerce, manufactures, and agriculture! With all these notoriously existing, can the *country* be said to be *saved*? The *Sinecures* have, indeed, been *saved*; the *Pensions* and *Grants* have been *saved*; and the *Boroughs* have been *saved*; *St. Mawe's*, *St. Michel's*, *Old Sarum*, *Gatton*, have been *saved*: but, to such a degree have the nation been ruined, that one half of the people, in many places, have become paupers, and we read in the public papers, that a Deputation is coming from the opulent town of Birmingham to inform the Ministers, *that rates can no longer be raised to feed the poor*, and that the town *prays for assistance*! And, yet, says LORD HARROWBY, the paper-money system has *saved the country*. His Lordship's notions about *country* are very different from mine.

If, indeed, the *peace* had brought what the Pittites promised us that it should bring; if it had brought us only the same degree of prosperity that existed before the war; if the peace had brought a peaceable government, and the usual blessings of peace, then, indeed, it might have been said with some colour of reason, that the nation had been *saved* by the paper-money, seeing that it was that paper-money, which enabled the government to carry on the war. But, as the thing now stands, what could have happened *worse* from not going to war? It is now very clear to me, as it was to Sir Francis Burdett and many other persons at the outset, that peace might have been preserved, with all possible advantage to this country. But, at any rate, what *worse* could have taken place than has now taken place? What could remaining at peace have produced *worse* than what has been produced by the paper-money war? Could remaining at peace have done any thing *worse* than destroy all our liberties and make us a nation of wretched, ruined people? No civilized nation was ever in *so miserable* a state as this nation now is. This is notorious. This is denied by nobody. Only read a paper in this Number relative to the *Watchmakers*, and another relative to the *diseases of the poor*. Only read the petitions to parliament relative to the *poor-rates*. And, then say whether nation was ever before in a state of such complete misery. And, in these pictures of wretchedness, we have a view of only *a part* of the suffering, and by no means of the most afflicting part. It is the anxiety, the heart-achings, the agonizing forebodings of the



fathers and mothers in the middle classes of life, whose days have been divided between the caresses of their children and their own incessant industry to provide for their support and respectability. Let LORD HARROWBY look at a father and mother of this description, when the former, after all his struggles to overcome his reluctance, has just communicated to the latter the fatal intelligence of his ruin. Let him behold the death-like gloom on their countenances. Let him hear their sighs, when their children, with inquisitive tenderness, ask the cause of that gloom. Let him, if he be capable, bring his mind to the contemplation of a scene like this. Let him reflect, that such scenes are now to be beheld in a great proportion of the farmers' and tradesmen's houses in the kingdom; and then let him say again, that the country has been *saved* by that paper money system, which has produced all these dreadful effects.

The talk about *national faith*, as applied to the funds, is the most foolish that ever was heard. What! can national faith demand the payment of *double what was borrowed*? It is the same sum in *name* indeed; but, as I have a hundred times proved, it is double the sum in *reality*. And, this is the *real breach of faith*; and this breach of faith has been occasioned, *not by the nation*, but by you, the Men of Paper-Money, who solicited and obtained from Pitt a protection against the law of the land; who thereupon issued immense quantities of the Paper-Money; who thus debased the currency; and, when you had lent *this* debased currency to the nation, then at your own arbitrary will, raised the value of the currency

by diminishing its quantity, and now demand your payment in this raised currency, and by this demand the people are crushed to death. Who, then, has broken the contract? Who has been guilty of a breach of faith? The breach of faith now exists: it is destroying the nation: it has been committed by you: justice demands that you make good the loss of the nation: and make it good you must, or this nation will be wholly ruined and its power destroyed.

To alter the value of the currency of a country has always been held to be a most wicked as well as a most fatal measure. Very bad kings, before Paper-Money Men were heard of, used, sometimes, to play such tricks with the *coin*; but, it never was done, in any reign, or in any country, without exciting great discontent and producing infinite mischief. The following document of pretty ancient date, will show what were the opinions of our ancestors upon this most important subject. It is very interesting, and well worthy of public attention. It is part of a Speech of SIR ROBERT COTTON, made to the Privy Council in the reign of CHARLES II.

### A SPEECH.

TOUCHING THE ALTERATION OF  
COYNE.

“MY LORDS,

“Since it hath pleased this Honourable Table to command, amongst others, my poor opinion concerning this weighty Proposition of Money, I most humbly crave pardon; if with that freedome that becomes my dutie to my good and gracious Master, and my obedience to your great command, I deliver it so up.

"I cannot (my good Lords) but assuredly conceive, that this intended Project of enhauncing the Coyne, will trench both into the Honour, the Justice, and the Profit of my Royall Master very farre.

"All Estates do stand *Magis Famâ quam Vi*, as *Tacitus* saith of Rome: and Wealth in every Kingdome is one of the Essentiall marks of their Greatnesse: and that is best expressed in the Measure and Puritie of their Monies. Hence was it, that so long as the *Romane Empire* (a Pattern of best Government,) held up their Glory and Greatnesse, they ever maintained, with little or no charge, the Standard of their coine. But after the loose times of *Commodus* had led in Need by Excesse, and so that shift of changing the Standard, the Majesty of that Empire fell by degrees. And as *Vopiscus* saith, the steps by which that State descended were visibly known most by the gradual alteration of their Coine. And their is no surer symptome of a Consumption in State then the Corruption in money

"What renown is left to the Posterity of *Edward* the first in amending the Standard both in purity and weight from that of the elder and more barbarous times, must stick as a blemish upon Princes that do the contrary. Thus we see it was with *Henry* the sixth, who after he had begun with abating the measure, he after fell to abating the matter; and granted commissions to *Missenden* and others to practise *Alchemy* to serve his Mint. The extremity of the state in general, felt this aggrivance besides the dishonour it laid upon the person of the King, was not the least advantage his disloyal Kinsman took to ingrace himself into the

People's favour to his Sovereign's ruin.

"When *Henry* the 8. had gained as much of power and glory abroad, of Love and Obedience at home, as ever any; he suffered shipwrack of all upon this Rock.

"When his Daughter Queen *Elizabeth* came to the Crown, she was happy in Councel to amend that Error of her Father: For, in a Memorial of the Lord Treasurer *Burleigh's* hand, I find that he and Sir *Thomas Smith* (a grave and learned man) advising the Queen that it was the honour of her Crown, and the true wealth of her Self and People, to reduce the Standard to the antient parity and purity of her great Grand-Father King *Edward* 4, and that it was not the short ends of Wit, nor starting holes of devises that can sustain the expence of a Monarchy: but sound and solid courses: for so are the words. She followed their advice, and began to reduce the Monies to their elder goodness stiling that work in her first Proclamation *Anno* 3. *A famous Act*. The next year following, having perfected it as it after stood; she tells her people by another *Edict*, that she had conquered now that *Monster* that had so long devoured them, meaning the Variation of the Standard: And so long as that sad Adviser lived she never (though often by Projectors importuned) could be drawn to any shift or change in the Rate of her monies.

"To avoid the trick of Permutation, *Coyne* was devised, as a Rate and measure of Merchandize and Manufactures; which if mutable, no man can tell either what he hath or what he oweth, no contract can be certain; and so all commerce; both publique



and private, destroyed ; and men again enforced to permutation with things not subject to wit or fraud.

“ The regulating of Coin hath been left to the care of Princes, who are presumed to be ever the Fathers of the Common - Wealth. Upon their honours they are Debtors and Warranties of Justice to the Subject in that behalfe. They cannot, saith *Boden*, alter the price of the monies, to the prejudice of the Subjects without incurring the reproach of *Faux Monnoyeurs*. And therefore the Stories terme *Philip le Bell*, for using it, *Falsificateur de Moneta*. *Omnino Monetæ integritas debet quæri ubi cultus noster imprimitur*, saith *Theodoret the Gothe* to his *Mint-Master*, *Quidnam erit tutum si in nostrâ peccetur Effigie?* Princes must not suffer their faces to warrant falshood.

“ Although I am not of opinion with *Mirros des Justices*, the antient book of our Common Law, that *Le Roy ne poit sa Mony Empeirer ne amender sans l'assent de tous ses Counts*, which was the greatest Council of the Kingdome ; yet can I not passe over the goodnesse and Grace of money of our Kings : (As *Edward the 1.* and the *3. Henry the 4.* and the *5.* with others, who, out of that Rule of this Justice, *Quod ad omnes spectat, ab omnibus debet approbari*, have often advised with the People in Parliament, both for the Allay, Weight, Number of peeces, cut of Coynage and exchange ;) and must with infinite comfort acknowledge, the care and Justice now of my Good Master, and your Lordships Wisedomes ; that would not upon information of some few Officers of the Mint, before a free and careful debate ; put in execution of this Project that I

much (under your Honours Favour) suspect, would have taken away the Tenth part of every man's due debt or Rent already reserved throughout the Realme, not sparing the King ; which would have been little lesse then a Species of that which the *Romane* Stories call *Tabulæ novæ*, from whence very often seditions have sprung : As that of *Marcus Gratidianus in Livie*, who pretending in his *Consulship*, that the Currant money was wasted by use, called it in, and altered the Standard ; which grew so heavy and grievous to the people, as the Author saith, because no man thereby knew certainly his Wealth, that it caused a tumult.

“ In this last part, which is, the Disprofit this enfeebling the coine will bring both to his Majestie and the Common Wealth, I must distinguish the Monies of Gold and Silver, as they are Bullion or Commodities, and as they are measure : The one, the Extrinsicke quality, which is at the King's pleasure, as all other measures ; to name ; The other the Intrinsicke quantity of pure metall, which is in the Merchant to value. As there the measure shall be either lessened or enlarged, so is the quantity of the Commodity that is to be exchanged. If then the King shall cut his shilling or pound-nominal lesse than it was before, a lesse proportion of such Commodity as shall be exchanged for it must be received. It must then of force follow, that all things of Necessity, as Victuall, Apparell, and the rest, as well as those of Pleasure, must be inhaunced. If then all men shall receive, in their shillings and pounds, a lesse proportion of Silver and Gold then they did before this projected Alteration, and pay for what they buy

a rate inhaunced, it must cast upon all a double losse."

Thus, then, my notions upon this subject are by no means *novel*, though they have been so loudly reprobated by the clans of 'Change Alley. Here this learned man, and faithful and honest counsellor of his king, shows how nations have been ruined and oppressed by arbitrary changes in the value of money; and all that is here said of coin, is equally applicable to paper. My good Paper-money Men, you will perceive, that the *breach of faith* is here ascribed to *him who changes* the value of the money; and, have not *you* been guilty of *this breach of faith*? It was not the nation, it was not those who borrowed, who changed the value of the money. It was you; and, you see, that one of these old lawyers would have called you *clippers and counterfeiters*. "No *contract* can be *certain*," says this great man, if the value of the money can be changed; and I am clearly of his opinion, that all contracts, affected in this way, are, in fact, broken by a force, with regard to which the parties contracting have no controul.

Is the nation, then, bound, is any individual bound to adhere to the letter of a contract, which has thus been broken by a force not to be resisted? *Good faith* requires, that the interest of the Debt should instantly be lowered *one half* in amount; and yet we constantly hear it said, that to lower it at all would be a *breach of faith*! Sir ROBERT COTTON had very different notions upon this subject. He regarded it as a *crime* in any man, or any body of men, even to *talk of a change in the value of*

*the currency*; and, in speaking of the *punishment* due to this crime, he seems to have *cast his eye forward*! It may possibly be useful to you to hear what he says upon this very *ticklish* part of the subject. "And His Majesty shall lose apparently by this alteration of monies a 14th in all the silver, and a 25th part in all the gold he shall receive: so shall the Nobility, Gentry, and all others, in all their former settled *rents, annuities, pensions, and loans of money*. The like will fall upon *Laborers and workmen in their yearly wages*: and, as their receipts are lessened thereby; so are their issues increased, either by raising all prices, or disfurnishing the market, which must necessarily follow. For, if, in the fifth year of Edward the Sixth, the third of Mary, and fourth of Elizabeth, it appeareth by the Proclamations, that a *rumour only* caused these effects, punishing the author of these reports with *imprisonment and pillory*; it cannot be doubted but *the projecting a change must be of farre more consequence and danger to the state*, and would be wished that the *Actors and authors* of all such **DIS-TURBANCES** in the Commonwealth, at **ALL TIMES HERE-AFTER**, might undergo a punishment *proportionable*."

Thus, then, my good Paper-Money Fellows, we turn the Table upon you! *You*, it is, who have made all the "*disturbances* in the Commonwealth." *You* are the evil-minded and designing men. *You* are the seducers. *You*, it is, who have been working to produce an utter "*subversion of the laws and constitution*"

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of the country. But, faith! it is not a *rumour* that you have set forth; it is not the *projecting of a change* of which you have been guilty: it is the *making of the change itself*, and that, too, both forward and backward, which you have been guilty of. What, then, ought, according to this learned man, be *your* punishment? If merely spreading a *rumour* of such a change being intended, merited *imprisonment and pillory*; and if the *projecting* of such a change merited a *far greater punishment* than prison and pillory; *what* ought to be the punishment of those who have *actually made such change*, and that, too, as I have before proved, over and over again, *to their own benefit*? Come, now! say yourselves what punishment such men deserve. You are a pretty sort of people to combine and issue out *Declarations* against those who are suffering the pangs of ruin and hunger from your changes of the currency, while you are wallowing in wealth, and lending to the Bourbons the fruit of the land and the labour of England! You are a pretty sort of people to talk of your *loyalty* to your King and your anxiety for the peace of your Country! You, who have produced the slavery, the distress, the misery, the abject and disgraceful condition of a people once so free and so happy.

And, do you think, you are to carry things thus *for ever*? Do you think that you are to *continue* to convey the earnings of the people of these unhappy islands over to the Continent, there to fructify the soil, and to give wealth and strength to those who hate and will seek to destroy us? Do you think, that you

are *always* to be gay, and to chuckle with delight at the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act? Do you think, that the misery and slavery of the nation are *always* to be with you subjects of sport? Do you think, that your tauntings and revilings of the Parliamentary Reformers are never to recoil upon yourselves?

I would advise you to be more moderate in your joy at the suspension of the people's liberties, and their (to you) apparently everlasting subjugation. For, take my word for it, that this state of things will not last *for ever*; no, nor for two years. Your *props* are at their wit's end. *They* have two things to look to, *money*, and the *means of getting it*. All that you look to is the money. But *they* must consider a little about the means; and they will soon discover, that, though a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act has *raised the funds*, it will not assist in *raising taxes*.

Your case is plain. Every body understands it. Every body wishes to see the principles of SIR ROBERT COTTON acted upon. But, here is the true history of your being supported so long. The *Borough Gentlemen*, those worthy, those loyal and public-spirited souls, would demolish you right quickly; but, *then!* What *then!* Why, the springing of the mine under this main bastion of corruption, would make a breach through which the Reformers would enter! This is the true history of the thing. You are as necessary to the Seat-owners as the Seat-owners are to you. You hate one another most cordially. They hate you, because you are keeping them poor; because their lands are

upon tick to you ; because you stick yourselves up along side of them, out-do them in expense, thrust your noses in their face, and, like the bailiffs in the play of the "*Good-natured Man*," humble them in the eyes of each other, by your freedom and familiarity, which, were it not for the length of your purses, would earn you a beating from the hands of their groom. For these reasons, they *hate you* ; and you hate them, because they have titles, and particularly *family pretensions*, which the possession of millions of "*Consols*" (what a word!) will never give you. You do get, and have already got, a good many of their manors and mansions and parks ; but, you cannot get the *family names* of the owners, and the family pretensions. Your wives and daughters may twist up their mouths and talk about "the *peasantry and the population*," in speaking of the *people* ; they may put on all the airs of the Gentry, and, if they do not find an old *Gothic Mansion* to their hands, they may make you *build one* out of the gains of your Scrip ; but, still, they know, that the old gentry soon *smoke* you. Country people are very inquisitive. You may have a thousand fine things about you ; your wives may dress as fine as the cream-coloured horses ; but, the old gentry will trace you back to Mincing-lane in a twinkling. This they do ; and, in revenge for your display of wines and plate and fineries, they now and then, as it were by accident, kindly invite you to talk a little about *your fathers and mothers*. For this you hate them and all the Borough-mongering tribe.

Still you pull together, because your union of effort is necessary to pre-

vent Reform. Part, however, you must, in the course of a very few years, or you will be a mutual destruction as you have been a mutual support ; and, when that *parting* comes, then comes happiness to the country.

For the reasons before mentioned, it is not to be expected, that the parliament will do any thing, in the way of reduction of interest, 'till *the last moment*. But, there are so many *projects* on foot ; so many nostrum mongers are at work ; there is such a shifting of plans and grounds, that the thing cannot possibly go on long. Besides, the mischief is so busily and so powerfully at work in all the walks of life. The poison is so active, and is of so deadly a nature, that a cure, or death, must speedily come. And, that there is no cure short of a sponge, general or partial, I am certain. The scheme for getting the Journeymen and Labourers to make *Savings* to put into the *Funds*, and, thus, to make them all *fund-holders*, would, if it could succeed, only induce them to array themselves *against the land-holders* and not leave them either acre or stump of tree ; but, it is too ridiculous to talk of, except as it is, amongst many others, a proof of the desperate quackery that is on foot.

However, *time* will show us what is to be done ; and, for the present, I leave you to your dear associates and your agreeable reflections.

WM. COBBETT.

P.S. The following Letter from a *Medical Man* is well worthy of attention.—This Number contains the remainder of the *Sedition Bill*, and, as this Bill is now become a *law*, to it we must now look as the guide for

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our conduct.—In my next Number, I shall endeavour clearly to trace *what that conduct ought to be*. We have done all that we now are permitted to do in order to obtain a *Reform*. The subject has, by us, been *fairly discussed*. We have, in no one instance, resorted to force, or to violence of any sort. And we have been answered as a King of France once answered the representations of the Swiss Cantons. “Indeed, Sir,” said the French Minister to his Master, “the Swiss Cantons have *truth and reason on their side*.” — “Have they?” answered the King of France, “Then I’ll declare war against the Swiss Cantons to-morrow morning!” We have triumphed in the *argument*, but there is no *arguing* with a gag in one’s mouth, or in a dungeon without pen, ink, and paper. — The insults that are now offered us by the SOUTHEYS, the GIFFORDS, the STODDARTS and by the SON OF THE GREEN ROOM, put me in mind of the words of a bloody man, who presided at the murdering tribunal under ROBESPIERRE. Having condemned, without a hearing and without evidence, a *fencing master*, to be guillotined: “*There!*” exclaimed the bloody and cowardly ruffian: “Parry *that thrust*, if you can, Mr. fencing master!” So the SOUTHEYS and the GIFFORDS exclaim, holding up the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act to our faces: “*There*, Reformers, answer *that if you can!*”

#### DISEASES OF POVERTY.

London, 16th March 1817.

SIR,—From the wide circulation of your publication, and from your well known patriotism, I trust that you

will insert this letter in your Register. I view, like yourself, the state of this unhappy country with the greatest alarm; but, Sir, I foresee evils that the generality of people are little aware of, and which you have even overlooked. The evils I allude to are far more alarming than any deficiency in the amount of the Taxes, or than the foolish schemes of the Spenceans; and their importance is such, that there is not a man in the country who is not interested on the subject.

As a medical man, then, I would address my countrymen on this awful occasion. I have, Sir, paid great attention to the subject of contagious diseases, and have read and sought for all the information I could get on this subject. It is a fact, and a well-known medical fact, too, that nothing renders the human body so liable to disease, particularly to contagious diseases, as poverty and wretchedness. Now, Sir, it is notorious that there are thousands of our countrymen in a state of starvation, and living in places not fit to keep a dog in. It is only last week that I attended a starving family, affected with the putrid sore throat; they were living in a miserable cellar, with five pans of glass broken in the window, the floor was half covered with water, and they had no fire, and only one bed for six of them, of which the family then consisted; the father was lying ill of a putrid fever, in the King’s Bench Prison. It was with difficulty I could restrain my tears at this accumulation of misery. I find it is become a common practice, now, for the poor to sleep six in a bed; and this they are enabled to do by lying three in the common manner, and the other three with their feet up to the others’ heads, and their heads at the bottom of the bed. To what a state of wretchedness and poverty is this country reduced to! I could give hundreds of instances of poverty equal to the above. It is only a month or two since, that a whole family was on the point of death from starvation; and had it not been that

an acquaintance happened to call, they would have perished. One youth, a lad of 17 or 18, the eldest boy, was dead, and that for want of food, too; the other son, a boy of 15, was out, endeavouring to pawn his jacket for three-pence. The person who called on them was so much affected at the horrid scene, that she fainted. The family consisted, before the death of the eldest son, of two boys, a mother, and daughter. Food was procured for them, and their manner of eating it was more like that of carnivorous animals than human beings, to such a state of hunger were they reduced. Now, Sir, you may depend upon it that this state of horrid wretchedness cannot exist long, without producing diseases of the most alarming and contagious nature. It always has been the case, and it always will be. So well is it known that the poor are more liable to contagious diseases than the rich, that, in Italy and France, it was the practice, in any large town, to drive out all the poor immediately, if any contagious disease made its appearance.

The fact is, that the poison of contagious fevers may be generated amongst the poor, from debility and want of cleanliness, and this has been proved decidedly to be the case in many instances. In 1779, the inhabitants of Carlisle were affected with a fever of the putrid kind. Dr. Heysham of that City, with great industry, traced its origin to a house near one of the gates, which was tenanted by five or six wretched families; these unhappy creatures had blocked up every avenue of light with which even wretchedness could dispose, to lessen the burden of the window tax, and thus contaminated the air of their cells to such a degree as to produce the poison of fever among them. Thus will it shortly be in this great town, if measures are not taken to prevent it. That such a circumstance has not yet taken place is no argument that it may not. To what extent the evil may go, God only knows; but that

if it once breaks out, and I firmly believe it will, the progress will be rapid beyond parallel, and fatal in proportion to the misery of the people. The safety of the higher orders is now closely connected with the welfare of the poor, and a minute and constant attention to their wants is not less an act of self-preservation than of virtue.

Now as to the measures that ought to be adopted. In the first place it is very evident that if the people continue to be taxed as they now are, that hundreds will daily be sinking into the state of misery above described. The fact is, that the weight of taxation is fast destroying the health and happiness of thousands, and that if immediate relief be not given, some dreadful calamity will be the result of the present system. The only way, then, to prevent the evil from extending, is to reduce the taxes; the next object is to give relief, if possible, to those who are in a starving condition, and dying for those comforts without which life cannot be long prolonged. From private charity I fear little can be expected. The Meeting at the London Tavern is an instance of this, and of the hollowness of their intentions. There were men present whose individual incomes amounted to more than the whole sum raised. Aye, and these incomes some of them paid by the people too; the whole sum would not have been sufficient to support the distressed inhabitants of London five days, on a moderate calculation. It is not from the hand of Charity that any permanent good can be expected. It is from the hand of Justice, from the united voice of hundreds of thousands of men who demand their rights (and who are, in fact, praying for existence) with a degree of moderation that is only equalled by their steadiness and perseverance in the great cause. Until a Reform takes place in Parliament, the present system will not be abandoned, and therefore the pressure of taxation will continue—probably be increased, if possible; and thus those who are now living by their own exertions, will

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shortly be reduced to indigence, and thus the great mass of human misery increased.

It is a fact not generally known, and one that makes a man shudder to think of, and sufficient to make an Englishman hang down his head in sorrow, that such is the condition of the poor, that the mothers of many families support their children and their husbands by the prostitution of their persons. Is this the end of the glorious war? Is this its consummation? Oh, shame! shame! There is something in the characters of Englishmen that distinguishes them from almost every other nation. An honest pride, an openness of heart, and particularly a fondness for their homes, and a great affection for their wives and children. What must be the feelings of a man who is supported, and whose children are fed by the prostitution of his wife? It is a most unnatural state of society, and speaks volumes as to the state of this unhappy country. Well might you say that crimes increase in proportion to the increase of taxation. The fact just mentioned is a most striking instance of the truth of the observation, producing the committal of a crime, which, to Englishmen, is odious, and which must appear horrid to every man who has either a head to think or a heart to feel. It is introducing a disease of the most loathsome kind into families, makes a brothel of the poor man's house, and subverts every moral principle.

I should not have troubled you with this letter, had I not felt myself imperiously called upon by my duty to communicate the above shocking facts to your readers, and also some opinions which experience has proved to be well founded.

Wishing you health to continue your exertions in the cause of freedom and humanity,

I remain

Your friend and admirer,

R.

### AFFECTING REPORT

*On the present Destitute State of the Working Classes in the Watch and Clock Trade.*

The Committee appointed to investigate the Distresses of the Workmen in the Watch and Clock Trade, after a minute and painful examination of the mass of wretchedness, unparalleled amongst the same class of artizans, have now before them upwards of Seven Hundred cases, taken from more than One Thousand Two Hundred applications; and the Committee have no doubt, but the real number of destitute workmen far exceeds the aggregate exhibited to their notice. Many deserving persons feel very reluctant to make such a disclosure of their circumstances as the Committee require (in order to prevent an improper application of the money entrusted to their care); and others, who, although sinking, are not yet reduced to the general level of misery, and are willing to hope they shall be able to weather the deluge of calamity which surrounds them. The Committee provided printed forms to be filled up by the applicants, and the returns made, comprise, with their families, nearly Three Thousand individuals; a number which may be estimated at about one half of those who are involved in the same distress. It appears, also,

|   |                    |
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| That the earnings of about<br>Eight Hundred workmen,<br>when fully employed, a-<br>mounted to ..... | } 1200l. per week. |
|---|--------------------|

|   |             |
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| That, for the last three<br>months, the same number<br>of persons have earned<br>only about ..... | } 300 ditto |
|---|-------------|

|   |             |
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| And, during the last month<br>not more than ..... | } 212 ditto |
|---|-------------|

Making a reduction of nearly One Thousand Pounds weekly.

There has evidently been a gradual decline in the Watch Trade for two years past, but during the last six months the want of employment has increased to a most calamitous extent; some being totally destitute of work, and others receiving not more than

from Five to Ten Shillings a week. Many families have been nearly starving, and such as have obtained the aid both of parish and charitable funds are scarcely half supplied. The Committee have visited the whole of the cases (with very few exceptions), and they have to state, that the returns made by the sufferers, far from being exaggerated, fall much short of their real distress.

The Committee, for obvious reasons, required an account of articles pledged for a limited period, viz. from the 25th of March to the 14th December, 1816; between which dates the following statement is collected:—

|                                    |        |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Working Tools amounting to . . . . | £ 101  |
| Wearing Apparel . . . . .          | 1211   |
| Bedding . . . . .                  | 272    |
| <hr/>                              |        |
| Total                              | £ 1584 |

What sum the whole of the pledges vested in the pawnbrokers' hands, by the same persons, within the last twelve or eighteen months, would amount to, has not been ascertained; but it may not be amiss to mention, that, previous to the investigation of the Committee, an enquiry was made of several pawnbrokers in Clerkenwell and its neighbourhood, as to the quantity of watchmakers' tools in their hands; and, by the accounts furnished, it appeared that two pawnbrokers alone held in pledge tools of that description to the amount of One Hundred and Ninety Pounds; a sum probably not equal to more than one-third of their real value. This fact sufficiently shews the want of employment, bringing with it a train of inevitable distresses. Hence arises, as the Committee have painfully witnessed, the necessity of parting with furniture, bedding, and apparel, to satisfy hunger. Hence arrears of rent and taxes, and other debts, which, from the depression of trade, those who have lived in respectability and credit, are rendered unable to discharge. Upon such circumstances follow injurious privations, despondency, and disease.

Many other evils might be enumerated, and scenes the most affecting to the feeling mind delineated—such as parents and children herding together in a miserable apartment, on beds of straw, or willow shavings—others wandering, without homes, and friendless. But enough, it is presumed, has been said, to call forth the sympathy and benevolent aid of those whose happiness is augmented in proportion as they lessen the miseries of others. Hitherto the Committee have had but little more than One Hundred Pounds to distribute, and, consequently, the relief afforded has been extremely limited; but they confidently hope this appeal will not fail to procure prompt and liberal Contributions.

*Donations in Aid of such Relief are received by*  
Messrs. COUTTS and Co. Bankers, Strand.  
Messrs. BARCLAY and Co. Bankers, Lombard street.

*Also by the following Watch and Clock Manufacturers, Members of the Committee;*  
Mr. WILLIAM COZENS, Treasurer, Wilderness Row, Clerkenwell.

Messrs. BARRAUD and Sons, Cornhill.

Messrs. DWERRIHOUSE and CARTER, Berkeley-square.

Messrs. GRIMALDI and JOHNSON, 431, Strand.

*And by the SECRETARIES.*

N. B. The Committee cannot refrain from suggesting, on the present occasion, that a most essential benefit would be conferred, if Watches and Clocks of home manufacture were more exclusively used.

S. FULLER, 64, Red Lion street, Clerkenwell,  
WM. GRIMSHAW, 150, Goswell-street,  
Secretaries.

March 1st, 1817.

#### WESTMINSTER ADDRESS.

“ADDRESS TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE REGENT.

“The Dutiful and Loyal Address of the Citizens of Westminster, in Public Meeting assembled.

“May it please your Royal Highness,

“We, his Majesty's loyal subjects, the Citizens of Westminster, always unwilling to approach your Royal Highness with the

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expression of any sentiments other than those of affection and gratitude, feel the deepest sorrow at being compelled, upon this occasion, to approach you with a recital of grievances and injuries, such as we firmly believe were wholly unknown to Englishmen in any former age.

"After a war of twenty five years duration, after sacrifices of blood and treasure unparalleled in the history of the world, after seeing ourselves bereft of fathers, brothers, sons, and friends without number, in this long and bloody struggle, we expected, and we were told to expect, as the reward of all our sacrifices and exertions, that real peace, and that lasting happiness and security, which, as we were told, it was impossible for us to enjoy without those sacrifices and exertions.

"But, alas! instead of real peace, we see established an immense standing army, the persons belonging to which are now to be separated wholly from the people by a law, which, on the vague charge of attempting to seduce them from their duty, makes any communication with them attended with the danger of an ignominious death, and which law, by being made perpetual, but too plainly avows the intention of making a standing army a settled and integral part of the government of our country, in which standing armies have always heretofore been held in such abhorrence. Instead of that happiness, which we were so repeatedly promised, we find ourselves plunged into misery unspeakable; and while distress, bankruptcy, and ruin, are sweeping before them the middle class of society, the labouring classes are actually perishing under the various and indescribable sufferings of a state bordering on absolute starvation. Instead of that security, which was to be the great prize of all warlike achievements, every man of us now feels that he sits in that house, which the ancient law called his castle, at the mere mercy of a Secretary of State; that he has no security for any one moment of his life; that he walks at large and breathes the open air solely at the will of another; and, of course, that he is a slave, and a slave too the more degraded, because his forefathers were free.

"Such, may it please your Royal Highness, is the reward which we have received for twenty-five years of toil and blood; such is the balm for the hearts of the widows and orphans made by the war; such is the result of a deadly contest for "social order;" such is the wretched and shameful state to which

England has, at last, been reduced by the measures of those Ministers, who, as the only answer to our repeated and humble supplications for the lightening of our burdens, and for the restoration of our undoubted and unalienable rights, have shaken the halter in our faces, and have rattled in our ears the keys of the dungeon; and whom we, therefore, most humbly, but most earnestly, implore your Royal Highness to remove from your Councils and confidence for ever, as the first step necessary to prevent England, once so happy, so mighty and renowned, from becoming a heap of ruin, a bye-word and a reproach amongst the nations of the earth."

#### SEDITIONOUS MEETINGS AND ASSEMBLIES BILL.

[Continued from folio 352.]

such person shall be so apprehended, in order to their being proceeded against for such offences according to law; and that if the persons so assembled, or any of them, shall happen to be killed, maimed or hurt, in the dispersing, seizing or apprehending, or endeavouring to disperse, seize or apprehend them, by reason of their resisting the persons so dispersing, seizing or apprehending, or endeavouring to disperse, seize or apprehend them, that every such justice of the peace, sheriff, under sheriff, mayor, head officer, high or petty constable, or other peace officer, and all and singular persons, being aiding and assisting to them or any of them, shall be free, discharged and indemnified, as well against the King's majesty, his heirs and successors, as against all and every other person and persons, of for or concerning the killing, maiming or hurting of any such person or persons so assembled, that shall happen to be so killed, maimed or hurt as aforesaid.

Provided always, and be it further enacted, That if any person or persons do or shall, with force and arms, wilfully and knowingly oppose, obstruct, or in any manner wilfully and knowingly let, hinder or hurt, any justice of the peace, or other person authorized as aforesaid, who shall attend any such meeting as aforesaid, or who shall be going to attend any such meeting, or any person or persons who shall begin to proclaim, or go to proclaim according to any proclamation hereby directed to be made, whereby such proclamation shall not be made, that then

every such opposing, obstructing, letting, hindering or hurting any such justice or other persons so authorized as aforesaid, and so attending or going to attend any such meeting, or any such person or persons so beginning or going to make any such proclamation as aforesaid, shall be adjudged felony without benefit of clergy; and the offenders therein shall be adjudged felons, and shall suffer death as in case of felony, without benefit of clergy; and that also every such person or persons so being assembled as aforesaid, to the number of fifty or more as aforesaid, to whom any such proclamation as aforesaid should or ought to have been made, and if the same had not been hindered as aforesaid, shall likewise in case they or any of them, to the number of twelve or more, shall continue together and not disperse themselves within one hour after such let or hindrance so made, having knowledge of such let or hindrance so made, shall be adjudged felons, and shall suffer death as in case of felony, without benefit of clergy; and that also if any person or persons so being at any such Assembly as aforesaid, shall with force and arms wilfully and knowingly oppose, obstruct, or in any manner wilfully and knowingly let, hinder or hurt, any justice of the peace or other magistrate, or any peace officer, in apprehending or taking into custody, in execution of any of the provisions of this act hereinbefore contained, any person or persons or endeavouring so to do, that then every such opposing, obstructing, letting, hindering or hurting, shall be adjudged felony, without benefit of clergy; and the offenders therein shall be adjudged felons, and shall suffer death as in case of felony, without benefit of clergy.

And be it further enacted, that the sheriffs depute and their substitutes, stewards depute and their substitutes, justices of the peace, magistrates of royal boroughs, and all other inferior judges and magistrates, and also all high and petty constables or other peace officers of any county, stewartry, city or town, within that part of Great Britain called *Scotland*, shall have such and the same power and authorities for putting this present act in execution within *Scotland*, as the justices of the peace and other magistrates aforesaid respectively have by virtue of this act, within and for the other parts of this kingdom; and that all and every person or persons who shall at any time be con-

victed of any of the felonies aforementioned, within that part of Great Britain called *Scotland*, shall for every such offence incur and suffer the pains of death and confiscation of moveables.

And whereas divers places have of late been used for delivering lectures or discourses, and holding debates, which lectures discourses or debates, have in many instances been of a seditious and immoral nature; be it further enacted, that every house, room, field, or other place, at or in which any lecture or discourse shall be publicly delivered, or at any public debate shall be had, on any subject whatever, for the purpose of raising or collecting money or any other valuable thing, from the person admitted, or to which any person shall be admitted by payment of money, or by any ticket or token of any kind delivered in consideration of money, or any other valuable thing, or in consequence of paying or giving, or having paid or given, or having agreed to pay or give, in any manner, any money or other valuable thing, or where any money or other valuable thing shall be received from any person admitted either under pretence of paying for any refreshment or other thing; or under any other pretence, or for any other cause, or by means of any device or contrivance whatever, shall be deemed a disorderly house or place, unless the same shall have been previously licensed in manner herein-after-mentioned; and the person by whom such house, room, field or place shall be opened or used, for any of the purposes aforesaid, shall forfeit the sum of one hundred pounds for every day or time that such house, room, field or place shall be opened or used as aforesaid, to such person as will sue for the same, and be otherwise punished as the law directs in cases of disorderly houses; and every person managing or conducting the proceedings, or acting as moderator, president or chairman at such house, room, field or place, so opened or used as aforesaid, or therein debating any discourse or lecture, or furnishing or delivering any book, pamphlet, newspaper or other publication as aforesaid, and also every person who shall pay, give, collect or receive, or agree to pay, give, collect or receive any money or any thing for or in respect of the admission of any person into any such house, room, field or place, or shall deliver out, distribute or receive any such ticket or tickets, or token or tokens as aforesaid, knowing such house, room, field or place

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to be opened or used for any such purpose as aforesaid, shall for every such offence forfeit the sum of twenty pounds.

And be it further enacted, that any person who shall at any time hereafter appear, act, or behave him or herself as master or mistress, or as the person having the command, government or management of any such house, room, field or place, as aforesaid, shall be deemed and taken to be a person by whom the same is opened or used as aforesaid, and shall be liable to be sued or prosecuted and punished as such, notwithstanding he or she be not in fact the real owner or occupier thereof.

And be it further enacted, that it shall be lawful for any justice or justices of the peace of any county, stewardry, city, borough, town or place, who shall by information, upon oath, have reason to suspect that any house, room, field or place, or any parts or part thereof, are or is opened or used for the purpose of delivering lectures or discourses, or for public debate, contrary to the provisions of this act, to go to such house, room, field, or place and demand to be admitted therein; and in case such justice or justices shall be refused admittance to such house, room, field or place, or any part thereof, the same shall be deemed a disorderly house or place within the intent and meaning of this act; and all and every the provisions hereinbefore contained respecting any house, room, field or place, hereinbefore declared to be a disorderly house or place, shall be applied to such house, room, field or place, where such admittance shall have been refused as aforesaid, and every person refusing such admittance, shall forfeit the sum of twenty pounds.

Provided nevertheless, and be it further enacted, that it shall be lawful for two or more justices of the peace for the county, stewardry, city, borough, town or place, where any house, room, or other building shall be intended to be opened for any of the purposes aforesaid, by writing under their hands and seals, at their General Quarter or General Sessions of the Peace, or at any Special Session to be held for the particular purpose, to grant a licence to any person or persons desiring the same, to open such house, room or other building, for the purpose of delivering for money any such lectures or discourses as aforesaid, or for the purpose of holding debates on any subjects, the same being clearly expressed in such li-

cence, for which licence a fee of one shilling and no more shall be paid; and the same shall be in force for the space of one year, and no longer, or for any less space of time therein to be specified; and which licence it shall be lawful for the Justices of the Peace for the same county, stewardry, city, borough, town or place, at any General Quarter or General Sessions of the Peace, to revoke and declare void and no longer in force, by any order of such Justices; a copy whereof shall be delivered to or served upon the person to whom the said licence so revoked shall have been granted, or shall be left at the house, room or building, for which such licence shall have been granted; and thereupon such licence shall cease and determine, and be thenceforth utterly void and of no effect.

Provided always, and be it enacted, that it shall be lawful for any Justice or Justices of the Peace of any county, stewardry, city, borough, town or place, where any such house, room or other building shall be licensed as herein provided, to go to such house, room or building so licensed, at the time of delivering any such lecture or discourse, or of holding any debate therein, as aforesaid, or at the time appointed for delivering any such lecture or discourse, or of holding any debate, and demand to be admitted therein; and in case such Justice or Justices shall be refused admittance to such house, room, or building, the same shall be deemed, notwithstanding any such licence as aforesaid, a disorderly house or place within the meaning of this act; and all and every the provisions hereinbefore contained respecting any house, room, field, or place hereinbefore declared to be a disorderly house or place, shall be applied to such house, room, or building, so licensed as aforesaid, where such admittance shall have been refused as aforesaid; and every person refusing such admittance, shall forfeit the sum of twenty pounds to any person who shall sue for the same.

Provided also and be it enacted, that it shall be lawful for any two Justices of the Peace, acting for any county, stewardry, riding, division, city, town, or place, upon evidence on oath that any house, room or place so licensed and opened as aforesaid, is commonly used for the purpose of delivering there lectures or discourses of a seditious or immoral tendency, to adjudge and declare the license for opening the same to have been forfeited, and such li-

cence shall thereupon cease and determine, and shall thenceforth be utterly void and of no effect.

Provided always, and be it enacted, that nothing in this act contained shall extend or be construed to extend, to any lecture or discourse to be delivered in any of the Universities of these kingdoms by any member thereof, or any person authorized by the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, or other proper officers of such Universities respectively; or to any lecture or discourse to be delivered in the public Hall of any of the Inns of Court or Chancery, by any person authorized by the Benchers of the Inns of Court, or by the Professors in Gresham College; and that no payment made to any schoolmaster or other person by law allowed to teach and instruct youth, in respect of any lectures or discourses delivered by such schoolmaster or other person for the instruction only of such youth as shall be committed to his instruction, shall be deemed a payment of money for admission to such lectures or discourses within the intent and meaning of this Act.

Provided always, that no person shall be prosecuted by virtue of this act for any thing done or committed contrary to the provisions hereinbefore contained, unless such prosecution shall be commenced within six calendar months after the offence committed.

Provided always, that all the clauses and provisions hereinbefore contained shall commence and have effect within the city of London, and within twenty miles thereof, from the day next after the day of passing this act; and shall commence and have effect, within all other parts of the kingdom, from the expiration of seven days next after the day of passing this act; and shall be and continue in force until the twenty-fifth day of March one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, and from thence, until the end of the then next session of Parliament.

And whereas divers societies or clubs have been instituted, in the metropolis and in various parts of this Kingdom, of a dangerous nature and tendency, inconsistent with the public tranquillity, and the existence of the established government, laws and constitution of the kingdom; and the members of many of such societies or clubs have taken unlawful oaths and engagements of fidelity and se-

crecy, and have taken or subscribed, or assented to, illegal tests and declarations; and many of the said societies or clubs elect, appoint or employ committees, delegates, representatives or missionaries of such societies or clubs, to meet, confer, communicate or correspond with other societies or clubs, or with delegates, representatives or missionaries of such other societies or clubs, and to induce and persuade other persons to become members thereof, and by such means maintain an influence over large bodies of men, and delude many ignorant and unwary persons into the commission of acts highly criminal: and whereas certain societies or clubs calling themselves "*Spenceans* or *Spencean Philanthropists*," hold and profess for their object the confiscation and division of the land, and the extinction of the funded property of the Kingdom: and whereas it is expedient and necessary that all such societies or clubs as aforesaid should be utterly suppressed and prohibited, as unlawful combinations and confederacies, highly dangerous to the peace and tranquillity of these kingdoms, and to the constitution of the government thereof, as by law established; be it enacted, that from and after the passing of this act, all societies or clubs calling themselves *Spenceans* or *Spencean Philanthropists*, and all other societies or clubs by whatever name or description the same are called or known, as above described, shall be and the same are hereby utterly suppressed and prohibited, as being unlawful combinations and confederacies against the government of our Sovereign Lord the King, and against the peace and security of his Majesty's liege subjects.

And be it further enacted, that from and after the passing of this act all and every the said societies or clubs, and also all and every other society or club now established or hereafter to be established, the members whereof shall be required or admitted to take any oath or engagement which shall be an unlawful engagement within the meaning of an act passed in the thirty-seventh year of his Majesty's reign, intituled, "an act for more effectually preventing the administering and "taking of unlawful oaths," or within the meaning of an act passed in the fifty-second year of his present Majesty's reign, intituled, "an act to render more effectual

(To be continued.)

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

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